

Patient Handbook



3801 Miranda Avenue • Palo Alto, CA 94304
(650) 493-5000 • www.paloalto.va.gov

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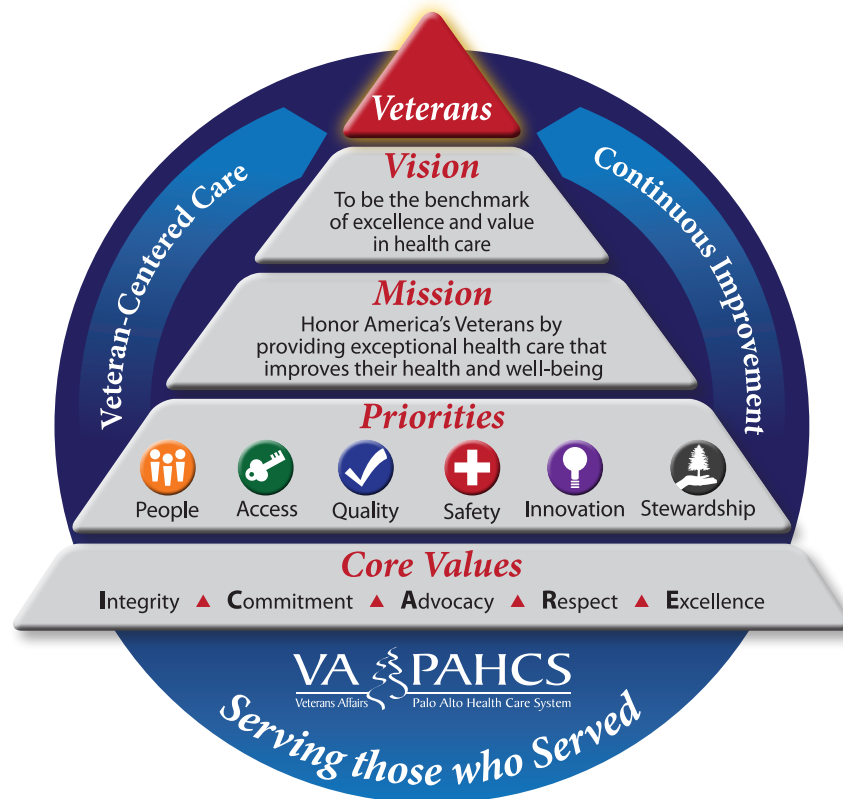
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Mission Statement

Honor America's Veterans by providing exceptional health care that improves their health and well-being.

Vision Statement

To be the benchmark of excellence and value in health care.

Core Values

Integrity, Commitment, Advocacy, Respect and Excellence



Priorities

- People
- Access
- Quality
- Safety
- Innovation
- Stewardship



Welcome

Welcome to the VA Palo Alto Health Care System. I want to personally thank you for trusting our health care system with your care and wellbeing.

We are proud to offer you world class medical care, and lead the nation in preventive health measures, clinical practice guidelines and patient satisfaction. Through our Stanford School of Medicine affiliation, and because many of our staff physicians are also Stanford faculty, you can be assured that you will have access to the latest innovations in health care. We understand that your medical care needs to be convenient to your schedule, so we are honored to provide comprehensive medical services at ten locations throughout California, offering a variety of special services.

We want to ensure you completely understand your care at the VA Palo Alto Health Care System, and want to give you an overview of what to expect. We will start by assigning you a primary care provider. Your provider and primary care team will partner with you in assuring your medical needs are met to your highest expectations and ensure you are referred for any specialty care you may need. Also, we hope that you will take advantage of the added information available to you at MyHealtheVet, VA's on-line program that brings a wealth of information to your fingertips.

At VA Palo Alto Health Care System, we never forget whom we serve. We are honored to provide care to our Veterans, and want you to know that you are not a number, statistic or illness. While with us, we hope you feel like family. Your care and wellbeing are critical to you, and to us, as well. To ensure we exceed all your needs, you will receive patient satisfaction surveys. This is your opportunity to tell us what we did well and where we can improve. We sincerely hope that you want to be able to rate the overall quality of your care as excellent, as you deserve nothing less.

Again, thank you for putting your care in our hands, and thank you for allowing us to show you why we are so proud to be "Serving those who Served."

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Joyce Freeman
Director



The Emergency Department is happy to serve you!

Emergency Department

The VA Palo Alto Emergency Department is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. It is located in Building 100 on the first floor to the right of the main lobby. The Emergency Department is available for any patient who feels they have an acute medical condition that needs attention. You do not need an appointment or referral to come to the Emergency Department.

The Emergency Department accepts patients in a wide variety of ways, mostly by walk in, but also by ambulance transport, referral from primary care doctors, or transfer from clinics or Community Based Outpatient Clinics. Patients are first checked-in by the clerk, and then seen by a specially trained nurse who will interview the patient and determine the seriousness of the illness to establish the order in which patients will be seen by the doctor. From there, urgent patients will be brought directly to the treatment area of the main Emergency Department. Less urgent patients may be sent to the Fast Track area of the Emergency Department or asked to wait in the waiting room for the next available doctor. Non-urgent patients can also be sent to different locations outside the Emergency Department if an appropriate appointment is available, for example to the Same Day Clinic in Building 5.

The Emergency Department strives to provide the best, most efficient care possible. Wait times, however, can vary widely depending on the number and types of patients who are in the Emergency Department. Patients are seen in a “worst first” order. This means that patients are not seen in the order of arrival time, but in order of the sickest, most urgent medical conditions. Illnesses requiring extended work-ups, radiologic and lab tests, and/or specialist consultations may make the Emergency Department visit longer. If you are at home and have questions regarding your symptoms, please contact the Telephone Care Program nurses at 1-800-455-0057. They will be able to recommend the appropriate location to be seen (the Emergency Department, Same Day Clinic, or your primary care provider).

In general, the busiest times in the Emergency Department are from 10:00 am to 8:00 pm, but it can be busy at any time. To avoid wait times in the Emergency Department, you may be able to take advantage of the following services:

For non-emergent questions or concerns or to schedule an appointment, please call the Telephone Advice Nurse: 1-800-455-0057.

For medication refills or to check upcoming appointments, please call Appointment/Medication Services: 1-800-311-2511.

For ongoing issues, please call your primary care team. To contact any of the Ambulatory Care Clinics, please call the Telephone Care Program at 1-800-455-0057.

If you feel that your condition is serious and/or life-threatening, please call

911

The Palo Alto Division is the only site with an Emergency Department. The other VAPAHCS sites do not have emergency departments or walk-in clinics.

Suicide Prevention

1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Suicide is not the answer

Are you, or someone you love, at risk of suicide?

Following is a list of warning signs:

- Talking about wanting to hurt or kill self*
- Trying to get pills, guns, or other ways to harm self *
- Talking or writing about death, dying, or suicide *
- Hopelessness
- Rage, uncontrolled anger, seeking revenge
- Acting in a reckless or risky way
- Feeling trapped, like there's no way out
- Increasing alcohol or drug abuse
- Withdrawing from friends, family and society
- Anxiety, agitation, unable to sleep or sleeping all the time
- Dramatic changes in mood
- No reason for living, no sense of purpose in life

If you have answered “yes” to the first three (*), don't wait – get help today by:

- Going to your local VA Mental Health Clinic
- Going to the nearest emergency room
- Going to the VA emergency room
- Calling 911 *or*
- Calling the Veterans Crisis Line and talking with a VA counselor

If you have answered “yes” to any of the others, make an appointment to see a mental health professional or call the veteran's crisis line.

The toll-free number is: **1-800-273-TALK (8255)**

Press “1” when you hear the recording
to be connected immediately.

You can also communicate with a VA counselor
through anonymous chat at:

<http://veteranscrisisline.net> or **TEXT to 838255**

Primary Care

At the VA Palo Alto Health Care System we are committed to providing you with the best possible health care. To help us achieve this goal, we would like each Veteran to have an assigned primary care team. A primary care team consists of a physician or nurse practitioner, an RN care manager, an LVN and a clerk. Our goal is to have you be seen by a member of your primary care team, when you want and need to be seen. This team will address all your health care needs including arranging and coordinating any referrals to specialists.

When you are due for an appointment with your primary care team, you will receive a post card in the mail asking you to call the Patient Scheduling Unit (1-855-632-8262) to schedule an appointment at a time convenient for you. If you have any health care questions or want to pass along any information to your health care team, you can call the Telephone Care Program at 1-800-455-0057. You will then have an option to leave a message for your primary care team or to talk with an advice nurse.

First time visit reminders

- Bring completed forms (Adult History Worksheet).
- Bring any records from outside doctors visits and bring all of your medicines to your first visit.
- Bring a list of your questions and concerns.
- Please arrive early to allow time for check-in, the taking of your vital signs and health screening. This Health Screening Appointment is scheduled 20 minutes before your Primary Care appointment.
- Come at least 2 hours early if you need to have laboratory work or x-rays done. If possible, have your laboratory or x-rays completed a few days before your visit so the results will be available for review by your team.

Locations and Hours of Primary Care Clinics

Palo Alto

Building 5, 2ND floor
3801 Miranda Avenue
Palo Alto, CA 94304

Clinic hours 8:00 am - 4:30 pm, Monday - Friday
Lab hours 7:30 am - 5:00 pm, Monday - Friday
(Lab is located in Bldg 100, 1ST floor)

Livermore

Building 62
4951 Arroyo Road
Livermore, CA 94550

Clinic hours 8:00 am - 4:30 pm, Monday - Friday
Lab hours 7:30 am - 4:30 pm, Monday - Friday
(Lab is located in Bldg 62, 2nd floor)

Stockton

1st floor
7777 South Freedom Dr.
French Camp, CA 95231

Clinic hours 8:00 am - 4:30 pm, Monday - Friday
Lab hours 6:30 am - noon, Monday - Friday

Modesto

1225 Oakdale Rd
Modesto, CA 95355

Clinic hours 8:00 am - 4:30 pm, Monday - Friday
Lab hours 6:30 am - 11:15 am, Monday - Friday

Sonora

13663 Mono Way
Sonora, CA 95370

Clinic hours 8:00 am - 4:30 pm, Monday - Friday
Lab hours 6:30 am - 11:00 am, Monday - Friday

San Jose

80 Great Oaks Blvd.
San Jose, CA 95119

Clinic hours 8:00 am - 4:30 pm, Monday - Friday
Lab hours 7:30 am - 3:30 pm, Monday - Friday

Monterey

3401 Engineer Lane
Seaside, CA 93955

Clinic hours 8:00 am – 4:30 pm, Monday - Friday

Lab hours 7:30 am - 3:30 pm, Monday - Friday

Capitola

1350 41st Ave., Suite 102
Capitola, CA 95010-3906

Clinic hours 9:00 am - 4:00 pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday

No Lab on site.

Fremont

39199 Liberty Street
Fremont, CA 94538

Clinic hours 8:00 am – 4:30 pm, Monday - Friday

Lab hours 7:00 am - 2:30 pm, Monday - Friday

(Lab is located in Bldg B)

***To contact any of the Ambulatory Care Clinics,
please call the Telephone Care Program at 1-800-455-0057.***

The Ambulatory Care Clinics are closed on the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Day
- President's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Columbus Day
- Veterans' Day
- Thanksgiving and Christmas

Telephone Care Program (TCP)

If you have a health care emergency - call 911

Urgent health concerns: 1-800-455-0057

To cancel an appointment: 1-800-455-0057

For urgent health concerns, an Advice Nurse is available 24 hours a day, including weekends and holidays. The toll-free number is 1-800-455-0057. The Telephone Care Program (TCP) gives you access to an Advice Nurse who can assist you with the following:

- Give health care advice
- Help you decide if you should come to the clinic or hospital
- Suggest things you might try for home care
- During normal business hours, Telephone Care can make you an appointment with the Sameday Clinic or your Primary Care Provider or team
- Answer questions about your appointments including canceling and rescheduling

Additionally, a Patient Services Assistant can:

- Cancel appointments
- Reschedule some appointments
- Get a message to your provider

Cancelling Appointments

If you are unable to keep an appointment, please cancel it by calling the Telephone Care Program. Thousands of appointments were lost last year due to “No Shows.” By calling to cancel your appointment at least 48 hours in advance, you will open up a space for another Veteran to be seen.

Hours of Operation

The Telephone Care Program operates Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm, except holidays. The TCP appointment line experiences a high call volume on Mondays and Tuesdays. To provide better customer service, if your call is not urgent, we recommend that you call during non-peak times. The non-peak times are on Wednesday, Thursday or Friday from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm.

For health care emergencies – call 911. VA does not provide emergency transportation to the hospital. Whether or not VA pays for an ambulance is determined AFTER you have been evaluated in an Emergency Department.

Women's Health Program

The focus of the Women's Health Program is to provide comprehensive primary care for women Veterans with safety, dignity and sensitivity. We offer the right care at the right time in the right place and use state of the art equipment and technology.

We have designated women's health providers at all sites including the Community Based Outpatient Clinics. At the Palo Alto site, we have a Comprehensive Women's Health Center that provides primary care and several other specialty services.

The services include:

Comprehensive Primary Care • Gender Specific Care

Services for OEF/OIF Veterans • Women's Heart Prevention Program

Gynecological Care • Comprehensive Breast Care

**Mental Health Services including Military Sexual Trauma
screening and counseling**

**Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation • Rheumatology • Pelvic Rehabilitation
Yoga • Acupuncture**

To contact the Women's Health Program Staff, please call (650) 852-3229.

The Women Veterans Program Manager is available to help women Veterans access the VA services they need.

She can be reached at (650) 493-5000, ext. 64915.

For Community Based Outpatient Clinics please contact the Women's Health Nurse Liaison:

Livermore Division: (925) 373-4700

Modesto Clinic: (209) 557-6200

San Jose Clinic: (408) 363-3000

Fremont Clinic: (510) 791-4000

Monterey Clinic: (831) 883-3800

Sonora Clinic: (209) 588-2600

Stockton Clinic: (209) 946-3400

Capitola Clinic: (831) 464-5519

Specialty Clinics

	Palo Alto	Livermore	Monterey	San Jose	Capitola	Stockton	Modesto	Sonoma	Fremont
Ambulatory Infusion Center	■	■							
Andrology	■								
Anticoagulation	■	■							
Cardiology	■	■	■	■					
Cardiothoracic	■								
Cystoscopy	■	■							
Dental	■	■							
Dermatology	■	■	■	■					
Diabetes	■	■		■					
Dialysis	■								
Diet	■	■	■	■					
Endocrine	■								
“Ear, Nose, Throat”	■	■							
Erectile Dysfunction	■								
Eye	■	■	■	■					
Gastric Bypass	■								
Gastrointestinal (GI)	■	■	■						
General Surgery	■								
Geriatrics	■		■						
Gynecology	■								
Hand	■	■							
Hematology	■	■	■						
Hypertension	■								
Infectious Disease	■								
Immunology	■	■		■					
Neurology	■	■	■	■					
Neurosurgery	■								
Nursing Treatment	■	■	■	■		■	■	■	■
Oncology	■	■							
Ophthalmology	■	■	■						
Optometry	■	■	■	■					
Orthopedics	■	■	■						
Orthopedics/Spine	■			■					
Pain	■								
Palliative Care	■								
Pharmacy	■	■	■	■					
Plastic Surgery	■	■							
Podiatry	■	■	■	■					
Prostate Needle Biopsy	■								
Pulmonary	■	■		■					
Renal Clinic	■								
Rheumatology	■								
Smoking Cessation	■	■		■		■			
Urodynamics	■								
Urology	■	■	■						
Vascular Clinic	■	■							
Vasectomy	■								
Women’s Health	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

Mental Health services are available at all sites, including Menlo Park

Program Overview

HBPC is a program that provides medical care in the homes of Veterans with complicated health problems when routine clinic care is not effective. HBPC primarily serves home bound patients needing long-term follow-up. The program may also care for terminally ill patients and those temporarily home bound.

Services provided include medical care, nursing care and education, rehabilitation services, nutritional counseling, social work services, pharmacy services, psychological assistance and bereavement counseling. HBPC provides help with medications, supplies and equipment, and can help with some necessary home improvements.

Who is Eligible?

- Patient is enrolled for VA care
- Patient has a health problem that requires care by a team of different health care providers
- Patient and/or caregiver accepts HBPC as the primary care provider
- Patient's care needs can be met by the HBPC program
- Patient lives within the HBPC's service area
- Patient has two or more of the following needs:
 - Multiple long term medical problems
 - No other accessible primary care provider
 - Difficulties with self care
 - Non-ambulatory (cannot walk or get around)
 - No caregiver or support network
 - Problems that prevent access to services
 - Frequent use of the Emergency Department
 - Terminally ill

Locations

Palo Alto, San Jose and Modesto

***Contact the HBPC Program for further information at
(650) 493-5000 ext. 62140.***

Program Overview

At VA Palo Alto Health Care System, we are working to offer and expand various clinical services using secure technology to improve health care access for our Veterans. Telehealth provides clinical care where Veterans live a distance from our clinics. Telehealth is one way in which we can improve the health of Veterans by providing the right care in the right place at the right time.

Telehealth allows you to be in your home, or at a nearby VA, to receive health care, improving convenience and access. Sometimes this is done with secure video conferencing to another VA or into your home computer. Sometimes it is done by simply having you enter information such as your blood sugar or blood pressure readings into a machine. Staff can then see the information you entered on a secure internet site and guide you in managing and improving your health. If you think Telehealth might be right for you, please discuss possible opportunities with your provider.



Pharmacy /Prescriptions

Pharmacy Benefits

VA has excellent pharmacy benefits which follow a national formulary for medications. VA doctors, pharmacists and nurses have developed this list of medications that are safe and cost-effective. If you are transferring your pharmacy needs to VA, your new providers may need to replace some of your medications with similar medications carried by the VA pharmacy. Therefore, it is very important to bring a current list of medications to your first visit. Medications for psychiatric or nervous disorders must be evaluated by a VA psychiatrist.

We encourage you to obtain all of your care through the VA, but we recognize that there may be situations where you choose or need to have some of your care provided in the community. To assure your safety and provide high quality care, you must have a VA provider to receive medications from the VA. Your VA provider must see you at regular intervals and have access to your outside health records and information. By law, VA pharmacy cannot fill a prescription written by a non-VA doctor. So if a private doctor gives you a new prescription or makes a change to your current prescription, you need to contact your VA provider. Based on your eligibility, you may be required to make a small co-payment for each VA medication.

Pharmacy Locations

Palo Alto: Bldg C1-100

Monday through Friday

9:00 am–7:00 pm

Saturday, Sunday & Federal Holidays*

9:00 am–5:30 pm

*Discharge and Emergency Department Prescriptions Only

Livermore: Bldg 62, 1st floor

9:00 am–5:00 pm

San Jose: Main waiting room

9:00 am–4:30 pm

Monterey: Main waiting room

9:00 am–4:30 pm

***Please order refills
at least 2 weeks
before you will
run out of
medication***

Pharmacy Refills

All refills come through our mail order pharmacy. You may not pick-up your refills at the nearest VA pharmacy. All refills are mailed from the VA mail order pharmacies located in Tennessee and Arizona, so please request your refills at least 2 weeks before you run out of medication.

Ordering Refills

There are three ways you can order refills:

1. Using your touch tone phone **1-800-311-2511** (Northern California) or **(650) 496-2580** (outside Northern California)
2. Online at the My HealtheVet website: www.myhealth.va.gov (Instructions for registering are on the website)
3. By mail with a medication refill form (which comes with each prescription)

Our automated telephone system allows you to request refills, check the status of your prescription order, or talk to pharmacy personnel. Pharmacy personnel are available to answer medication-related questions during regular business hours.

Ordering Your Prescription Refills by Phone and Checking the Status of Your Order

You must have a touch tone phone to order your refills by phone.

Refills are mailed from VA mail order pharmacies located in Tennessee and Arizona, so please ***order your next refill at least 2 weeks before you run out of medication.***

To avoid delays we recommend you request your next refill for routine medications as soon as you get your medication order in the mail.

How do I order my refill by phone?

1. Using your touch tone phone, call:
 - **1-800-311-2511** (Northern California) or
 - **(650) 496-2580** (Outside Northern California)
2. Enter your full social security number, then press the # key
3. Press **2** for Pharmacy
4. Choose from one of the following 3 options:
 - Order refills
 - Check the status of your prescription order
 - Talk to pharmacy staff

Sample Prescription Label

Prescription
Number →

VAMC PALO ALTO, CA 94304
640PAD 800-311-2511 (7110/)
RX #3546612 Jan 1 2014 Fill 1 of 2
DOE, JOHN 11-1234
TAKE ONE TABLET BY MOUTH EVERY DAY

DR. JOE SMITH
QTY: 30 TAB
E.C. ASPIRIN 325 MG TABS

To Order Refills, Press 1

- Enter your prescription number (***no letters***) followed by the # key. Your prescription number is located on the prescription label (see highlighted area on the sample label to the left).
- If there is more than one refill, stay on the line and wait for instructions to Press **1** again to order the next refill.

- All refills will be **mailed** to you.
- Use your most recent prescription number when ordering. Older numbers will not work, even if the medication is the same. The pharmacy can print you a list of your most recent medications and prescription numbers upon request.
- We do not accept verbal refill requests.
- If your mailing address has recently changed, follow the instructions below to speak to pharmacy staff before requesting your refills.

To Check the Status of Your Prescription Order, Press 2

- Enter your prescription number (**no letters**) followed by the # key.

To Talk to Pharmacy Staff, Press 8

Staff is available Monday through Friday 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., except on federal holidays. You can ask questions about your medications, side effects, or drug interactions, and find out what to do if you are running out of medication.

How Do I Order Refills Online Using My HealtheVet?

Thousands of Veterans are ordering their medication refills safely and easily using the national VA Internet-based program MyHealtheVet. You will need to first establish your personal user ID and password by going to the MyHealtheVet website: www.myhealth.va.gov (see page 40 to learn more about MyHealtheVet).

To Order Refills, go to www.myhealth.va.gov

- Click on the “Go to MyHealtheVet – enter here” button
- In the member login area, enter your user ID and password
- Click on the Pharmacy button, then Rx Refill then Refill Prescriptions
 - A Refill Prescription Information page will appear
 - Active prescriptions will be listed, and those that are available for refill are displayed with an empty checkbox.
- Click on the corresponding checkbox(es) for the prescription(s) you wish to refill
- Once you have made your selection(s), click the red “Submit Refills” button at the bottom of the page.

An alert will show at the top of the page when your refill requests have been submitted. Requested refills will now be labeled as “submitted,” meaning your request has been received for processing.

Ordering Refills by Mail

If you do **not** have a touch tone phone or cannot order your refills by computer or phone, you may continue to mail in your refill request forms to:

VA Palo Alto Pharmacy Service (119)
3801 Miranda Ave.
Palo Alto, CA 94304

Medication Co-payment Information

Depending on your eligibility, you may need to make a small co-payment for your medications.

You **do not** need to pay for medications if:

- You are service-connected at 50% or more
- The medication is for a service-connected condition
- You have a prescription for medical supplies (syringes, tape, etc.). Please note, there may be limits to the quantity the VA can provide
- You receive a VA pension
- You are taking an investigational medicine
- Your income level is below a certain level that is set by law

You **do** have a small co-payment if you are:

- Non-service connected and above a certain income level set by law
- Service-connected less than 50% and receiving treatment for a non-service connected condition

Copayment charges:

Copays are \$9.00 for up to a 30-day supply and \$27.00 for a 3-month supply of each medication you receive. When you pick up the medication from our pharmacy, you may pay the Agent Cashier. If we mail them to your home, you can pay by money order or check when you receive them. ***Please do not send cash!*** If you do not pay, you will receive a bill.

Pharmacy Frequently Asked Questions

Why are refills processed by mail only?

Processing refills by mail increases the amount of time our pharmacists can spend discussing new prescriptions with you face to face. It also reduces the waiting time for new prescriptions that need to be filled urgently.

How soon should I call or mail in my order for refills?

We recommend that you call **1-800-311-2511**, order online at ***www.myhealth.va.gov*** or mail in your next refill request at least ***2 weeks before you run out of medication.*** You may request ***routine*** medications as soon as you receive your refill in the mail. Our computer system calculates an appropriate date when the refill can be mailed to you. Remember, medications are mailed from Tennessee or Arizona. If you mail in your refill requests, it may take up to one week to process the request.

Why are refills not automatically mailed on a regular basis?

The reason is your ***safety!*** The pharmacy does not always know when a provider tells you to stop taking a medication. If we mailed refills automatically, you might receive a medication your provider does not want you to use anymore.

Why do I sometimes receive items I did not order?

This can happen when your provider orders a new prescription or renews your prescriptions.

The pharmacy processes and mails all prescriptions renewed by your provider. This ensures you will continue to have active prescriptions for your medications and supplies.

To prevent getting medications you do not need or did not order (and being charged a copayment), you should talk with your provider at your appointment to check which medications he or she is ordering for you. Also, talk with your pharmacists and let them know which medications you need and do not need at this time. ***Remember, pharmacy cannot accept returned medications and remove a co-pay once the medication has been mailed to you.***

My VA doctor called and told me to increase my medication from 1 tablet to 2 tablets a day. Does my doctor need to write a new prescription?

Yes. If your provider increases the number of tablets you take each day, you will run out of medication before your next refill arrives. Remind your provider to write a **new** prescription to prevent this from happening.

*Please order refills
at least 2 weeks
before you will
run out of
a medication*

My private doctor gave me a new prescription or my private doctor increased my dose on a medication. Can the VA pharmacy fill this prescription?

No. The VA pharmacy can only fill prescriptions written by VA providers. You must contact your VA provider directly (not the pharmacy) to discuss the change in your medication therapy.

My medication has expired or has no refills and I am almost out of medication. What should I do?

You may call the pharmacy **Telephone Care Program** line at **1-800-311-2511** to request refills. A pharmacy staff member will send a refill request to your VA provider. Your provider must authorize additional refills before medication can be mailed to you.

Will I be able to get prescriptions that are written by my private doctor from the VA pharmacy?

Your VAPAHCS primary care provider will review your outside records, and then if he/she agrees that the medication is safe, appropriate and available through our pharmacy, the provider will order the medication for you to be filled by the VA pharmacy.

Can't the VA provider just rewrite my prescriptions from my private doctor?

No. The VA provider will not rewrite a prescription that you bring from your private doctor until he/she has had a chance to review your outside records. If your private doctor writes you a new prescription and you want your VA provider to give you the medication you must bring in records from your private doctor that explain why the medication was prescribed, the name of the medication and the dose.

Prescriptions from Non-VA Providers:

To see if the VA carries your current medication, you can ask your VA pharmacist or provider or go to the following website:

<http://www.pbm.va.gov/NationalFormulary.aspx>

- Click on **VA NATIONAL FORMULARY**

Do I need to give up my private doctor and change to a VA provider in order to receive my medications from the VA?

No. If you want to be followed by both your private provider (local doctor), and VA provider, it is your responsibility to:

- See the VA provider at regular intervals
- Be sure your VA provider has the name and phone number for your private doctor
- Be sure your VA provider has current updates on hospital admissions, test results and outpatient visits to your private doctor

If I decide to change to a VA provider, will I receive my medication on the same day as my first appointment?

Possibly. VA providers will prescribe medication(s) for you when they have enough information about your medical problem. Usually that means the VA provider will need to review your records from your previous doctor. You can help your VA provider by bringing your outside medical records to your first VA visit.

Can I see a specialist at the VA and keep my family doctor?

You may see a specialist here and keep your private doctor. However, the specialist can give you medications to treat only that specific problem. They cannot give you any other medications written by your private doctor.

What if I am admitted to an outside hospital and my medications are changed?

Your VA provider will need to know what happened. If you wish to get the new medications from the VA pharmacy, you must get a copy of the medical records from the outside hospital when you are discharged. Please contact your VA provider and provide him/her with the medical records from your recent hospital stay.



Social Work Service

Social Work Service is available to help you and your family with the stresses that often arise during an illness. Please contact your Social Worker by dialing (650) 493-5000 and press 0 for the operator. Ask to be connected to the Social Work Department at ext. 65455 and someone can direct you to the appropriate social worker. On the weekends or holidays, you can ask the operator to have the Social Worker on call paged. Social Work Service can assist with the following:

Emotional Support or Counseling

- Help in coping with separation from families and friends
- Help in coping with the stress of illness or disability
- Individual and family counseling services
- Grief Support and Bereavement Counseling
- Review of Spiritual Support

Planning for Discharge from the Hospital

Referrals for Financial Assistance

- For VA Benefits
- For Social Security Disability
- For Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Inquiries about Medicare insurance and coverage
- For State Disability
- For Medi-Cal

Legal Services

- Education about and help with filling out a Living Will & Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care
- Information on a lawyer referral service for Disability-related legal issues
- Education about and referrals for Probate Conservatorship

Referrals to Housing

- Independent Living
- Assisted Living/Residential Care
- Nursing Home
- Emergency Housing
- Transitional Living Centers
- Subsidized Housing

Referrals to Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Referrals to VA/Community Resources such as:

- Respite
- Transitional Care Unit (TCU)
- Hospital Based Home Care
- Adult Day Health Programs
- In-Home Support Services
- Meals on Wheels
- Transportation
- Hospice
- Chaplain Service
- Other VA & Community Services

Information about your Illness

- Support Groups
- Written Materials & Classes

Drug and Alcohol Assessment and Referral

Fisher House

Fisher House is a free, temporary lodging facility on the VA Palo Alto campus for families of active duty military personnel and families of veterans who are undergoing treatment through the VA Palo Alto Health Care System. Families must be coming from over 50 miles away and needing lodging for at least 3 nights. Referrals are made by a VA clinician from the patient's treatment team who screens family members for appropriateness. Veterans or active duty military personnel may stay at the Fisher House if accompanied by a family member or caregiver while they receive outpatient treatment. Fisher House can accommodate children as long as they have adult supervision. A maximum of three people total can be housed in one room. Each room has its own bathroom. Laundry facilities are available.

Families are asked to provide their own food and can cook in the shared kitchen. Check-in is weekdays from 11 a.m. - 6 p.m., and photo-I.D. is required. Check-in for after hours, weekends, and holidays is with the Administrative Officer of the Day in the main hospital. Contact: (650) 493-5000 ext. 69914.

Interpreter Services

Would it be easier for you or your caregiver to understand your medical care and treatment if it were explained in your native language? VAPAHCS uses Language Line to provide language interpretation and translation services for patients and families with Limited English Proficiency. This service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in over 200 languages. Just ask our clinical staff..

Defenders Lodge

The purpose of the Defenders Lodge is to provide lodging for a Veteran who has an outpatient appointment or a procedure at the Palo Alto or Livermore site and is traveling from a distance greater than 50 miles or has significant transportation difficulties. For more information regarding lodging options for Palo Alto or Livermore, please call the Defenders Lodge Coordinator at (650) 493-5000 ext. 64487.

If you need a Defenders Lodge referral, contact your primary care provider. If you do not have a primary care provider, please contact a Social Worker. Veterans can also find information about local lodging by going to the Visitor Information section of the VA Palo Alto website (www.paloalto.va.gov).

VA Caregiver Support Program

Who is a Caregiver?

If you answer “yes” to any of the following questions, you are a caregiver of a Veteran:

- Do you feel responsible for providing support to a Veteran?
- Do you help out a Veteran around the home, with cooking or cleaning, even if only on an occasional basis?
- Do you take a Veteran to run errands and/or escort him or her to medical appointments?
- Would the Veteran call you in an emergency and expect your prompt assistance?
- Do you provide support or assistance to a Veteran living in long-term care, assisted living, or a residential facility?

The sole purpose of the Caregiver Support Program is to help the wife or husband, mother or father, sister or brother, daughter or son, domestic partner or loving friend who cares for a Veteran.

We are caring professionals who can...

- Tell you about the help available from VA
- Help you access services and benefits

Contact us toll-free at **1-855-260-3274** or visit our website at

www.caregiver.va.gov

Chaplain Services/ Spiritual Care

The Chaplain Service of the VA Palo Alto Health Care System welcomes you to our healing and caring institution. Spiritual care and treatment is designed to address the spiritual needs and concerns of all Veterans. Treatment is provided by clinically trained chaplains committed to working with men and women Veterans. Our intent is to provide a safe and confidential atmosphere in which Veterans can find support in maintaining optimal spiritual well-being. Our Chaplains represent many faith groups, and minister to patients of many religious traditions as well as people who do not profess to have faith. Chaplains have Board Certified clinical skills and have been approved by their faith denomination bodies to serve in hospital settings. If there are other faith representatives you wish to notify, a Chaplain would be glad to assist you in making contact with your spiritual community.

Spiritual Program Components

When you feel the need for support through prayer or conversation, in order to find hope, discover guidance, to grieve, to help you when you feel alone, broken, sad, angry, confused, afraid, or doubting, or when you just need to talk to someone who cares, you may request a Chaplain visit.

Ask your provider to put in a consult to request a Chaplain visit. Women Chaplains are available for issues of special concern for women patients.

Spiritual Care Services

- AA Recovery Groups
- Grief Counseling and Support
- Ethical Decision Making
- Crisis Intervention
- End of Life Issues
- Spiritual Formation
- Bereavement Planning
- Worship/Memorial Services
- Sacramental Ministry
- Pre- and Post-Surgery Support

Chaplain Service also offers inspirational/spiritual/informational content on channel 15 “Chaplain’s Channel” 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

During business hours call (650) 493-5000 ext. 65532. After hours from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. Dial O, for Operator for assistance to reach an on-call Chaplain. Chaplains are also available at Menlo Park at (650) 493-5000 ext. 22518, 22243, or 22241 and Livermore at (925) 373-4700 ext. 35370, 35369, or 35542.

For Community Based Outpatient Clinics please contact:

San Jose Clinic
(408) 363-3000 ext. 73594

Monterey Clinic
(831) 883-3800

Stockton Clinic
(209) 946-3401

Sonora Clinic
(209) 588-2600

Fremont Clinic
(510) 791-4000

Modesto Clinic
(209) 557-6200

Regular Chapel Services

Palo Alto

Catholic Mass

M-F 11:00 AM

Sunday 9:00 AM

Protestant Worship

Sunday 10:30 AM

**Prayer and
Meditation**

Wed 12:30 PM

Menlo Park

Catholic Mass

M-F 12:30 PM

Saturday 11:00 AM

Sunday 11:00 AM

Protestant Worship

Sunday 9:30 AM

Livermore

**Catholic Mass
(Chapel)**

M-W, F 12:30 PM

**Sunday (Bldg. 90)
10:30 AM
2:00 PM**

**Protestant Worship
(Bldg. 90)**

Sunday 2:30 PM

Patient Visitation

At VAPAHCS we respect your right to be an active partner in your healthcare. We encourage you to involve your family in your care. VAPAHCS allows a family member, friend or other person to be with you for emotional support during your hospital stay. You may choose any person you like as long as that person does not impose on the rights of others, or cause safety problems or if it is not medically or therapeutically indicated.

VAPAHCS does not allow discrimination based on age, race, ethnicity, religion, culture, language, physical or mental disability, socioeconomic status, sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity or expression.

VAPAHCS has an open visiting policy for most units, but please check with unit staff to make sure the Veteran you wish to visit is available. Visiting hours for the Mental Health units are from 12pm to 8pm.



Chapter 4

Admissions and Benefits

The Admissions and Benefits Section gathers information required to establish and verify a Veteran's eligibility for VA health care. The information is also used to decide the Veteran's priority group. Staff will also check income to find out if co-payments will be charged for medical visits or prescription medications. Some Veterans qualify for cost-free health care services because of a service-connected condition or other factor. However, most Veterans need to complete a financial assessment (Means Test) every year to find out if they qualify for cost-free services. Veterans whose household income and net worth exceed the set threshold, and those who choose not to complete the financial assessment, must agree to pay the required co-pays to become eligible for VA health care services.

Business Hours:

Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Admissions & Benefits Services Customer Service Line: (650) 493-5000, ext. 66266.

Locations:

Palo Alto Division

Building 100, Room A1-100

Menlo Park Division

Building 334, Room A101

Livermore Division

Building 62, Room 102

San Jose Clinic

Bldg 80, Rooms A103 and A104

Monterey Clinic

Building 99, Room B-105 and B105a

Stockton Clinic

777 Freedom Drive

Sonora Clinic

13663 Mono Way

Modesto Clinic

1255 Oakdale Road

Non-VA Medical Care

(Formerly known as Fee Basis)

In certain circumstances, VA may pay for care you receive from a non-VA health care provider. This can happen if:

- The services you need are not available in VA
- The services are available in VA, but at a great distance from your home

These services must meet the VA's quality standards and must be authorized in advance. The Fee Basis Section processes claims for Non-VA Hospitalization and Outpatient Fee Services.

The staff process each claim, decide if VA can pay the claim, and send the Veteran written notification about the decision.

Emergency* Care in a non-VA Hospital/Facility may be covered by VA (*situations in which any delay in medical attention would endanger your health or life). If you are treated in a non-VA hospital/facility for a medical emergency, notify:

**VA Palo Alto Health Care System
Provider Relations Unit
(650) 617-2788**

Please notify us as soon as possible. There are filing limits for paying claims. VA may pay for your care if you are service-connected for the emergent condition, or permanently and totally disabled. You may also be covered under the Millennium Emergency Act.

Provider Relations Customer Service Line:

Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm

(650) 617-2788

To qualify under the Millennium Emergency Act:

- You must be enrolled in the VA Health Care System
- You have received care from a VA provider/clinician within the last 24 months
- You received care in a hospital emergency department or similar emergency care facility
- You have no other form of health insurance, including Medicare, Medi-Cal, etc.
- You do not have coverage under any other VA programs
- VA or other Federal facilities were not feasibly available at the time of the emergency
- A reasonable lay person would judge that any delay in medical attention would endanger your health or life
- You are financially liable to the provider of the emergency services
- You have no other contractual or legal recourse against a third party that will pay all or part of the bill (i.e. automobile insurance, civil suit, tort claim, etc.)

Medical Care Cost Recovery (MCCR)

The primary function of the MCCR Section is to recover the cost for treating patients for nonservice connected care at the VA Palo Alto Health Care System. Federal law authorizes VA to bill reasonable charges to Veterans' third party health coverage. Health insurance payments are used to eliminate or decrease a Veteran's co-payment responsibility, if applicable.

Veterans who are unable to pay their co-payments, or who cannot pay their accounts, should call the MCCR Customer Service Line to make payment arrangements (e.g.: requesting a repayment plan or to have the co-pay debt waived because of financial hardship). Federal law requires VA to refer debts to Debt Management Collection or the Department of the Treasury, Financial Management Service, to offset or intercept federal payments to repay delinquent debts after failed attempts have been made to collect monies due.

MCCR Customer Service Location:

Building 6, Room C138

Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

MCCR Customer Service Line: 1-866-347-2353

Release of Information

We can assist you with:

- Access to your medical records;
- Obtaining copies of your medical records;
- Requests to amend your medical records;
- Completion of forms for benefits, insurance, and other reasons.

How to request information

Please see our website for forms: <http://www.paloalto.va.gov/patients/roi.asp>

You may complete the requested information, sign, date the form, and mail it to the following address:

VA Palo Alto Health Care System
Release of Information (11MR)
3801 Miranda Avenue
Palo Alto, CA 94304

Because forms must contain an original signature, emailed forms cannot be accepted. You can also fax request to (650) 617-2603.

You may also call us toll-free at 1-855-780-7962, or (650) 849-0403 for more information, or visit us at any of the following locations:

Locations

Facility	Open	Location
Palo Alto	Mon-Fri 8:00am-noon 1:00pm-4:30pm	Building 100 First Floor Room F1-115
Menlo Park	Mon-Fri 8:00am-4:30pm	Building 334 Second Floor Room B203
Livermore	Mon-Fri 8:00am-4:30pm	Building 62 Second Floor Room 230
San Jose	Mon-Fri 8:00am-4:30pm	Main Building Room A304
Monterey	Mon-Fri 8:00am-4:30pm	Main Building Room B128

Disability Compensation Benefits

What is Disability compensation?

Disability compensation is a tax-free benefit paid to a Veteran for disabilities caused or made worse by injuries or diseases that happened while on active duty, active duty training, or inactive duty training. Disability compensation may also be paid to certain veterans disabled from VA health care.

Who Is Eligible?

You may be eligible for disability compensation if you have a service-related disability, and you were discharged under other than dishonorable conditions.

How Much Does the VA Pay?

The amount of basic benefit paid ranges, depending on how disabled you are. You may also be paid additional amounts, in certain instances, if you have:

- Very severe disabilities or loss of limb(s)
- A spouse, child(ren), or dependent parent(s)
- A seriously disabled spouse

How Do You Apply?

- Fill out VA Form 21-526, Veterans Application for Compensation and/or Pension. If you have any of the following materials, please attach them to your application: Discharge or separation papers (DD214 or equivalent); Dependency Records (marriage and children's birth certificates); Medical evidence (doctor and hospital records). Mail to the VA Regional Office that serves your area of residence. VA Regional Office may be contacted at 1-800-827-1000.
- Or, apply online through our website <http://vabenefits.vba.va.gov/vonapp>
- Or, contact a Veterans Service Officer (VSO) from a Veterans Service Organization who can help you apply. Please call the Regional Office

toll free number, 1-800-827-1000, for the location of the VSO nearest you. You may also look to the VA web site for a list of the nationally recognized Veterans Service Organizations. Many VA medical centers and VA community based outpatient clinics have Veterans Service Organizations available onsite to assist you.

Veterans Pension Benefits

What is Disability Pension?

Disability pension is a benefit paid to Veterans who are either permanently and totally disabled, or age 65 and older, and meet certain requirements.

Who Is Eligible?

You may be eligible for disability Pension if you:

- Are either permanently or totally disabled or are age 65 and older, and
- Have 90 days or more of active military service, at least one day of which was during a period of war. (The 90-day active service requirement does not apply to veterans with a service-connected disability justifying discharge from the military. Veterans who entered active duty on or after Sept. 8, 1980, or officers who entered active duty on or after Oct. 16, 1981, may have to meet a longer minimum period of active duty), and
- Were discharged under conditions other than dishonorable, and
- The disability is for reasons other than your own willful misconduct.

How Much Does the VA Pay?

Payments are made to bring the veteran's total income, including other retirement or Social Security income, to a level set by Congress. Un-reimbursed medical expenses may reduce countable income for VA purposes.

How Do You Apply?

- Fill out VA Form 21-526, Veterans Application for Compensation and/or Pension. If you have any of the following materials, please attach them to your application: Discharge or separation papers (DD214 or equivalent); Dependency Records (marriage and children's birth certificates); Medical evidence (doctor and hospital records).
Mail to the VA Regional Office that serves your area of residence.
VA Regional Office may be contacted at 1-800-827-1000.
- Or, apply online through our website <http://vabenefits.vba.va.gov/vonapp>
- Or, contact a Veterans Service Officer (VSO) from a Veterans Service Organization who can help you apply. Please call the Regional Office toll free number, 1-800-827-1000, for the location of the VSO nearest you. You may also look to the VA web site for a list of the nationally recognized Veterans Service Organizations. Many VA medical centers and VA community based outpatient clinics have Veterans Service Organizations available onsite to assist you.



Veteran and Family Advisory Council

“Helping to create patient-centered care through the voice of our Veterans and family members”

The Veteran and Family Advisory Council, established in 2009, serves as a “voice” for those who receive care in the VA Palo Alto Health Care System. In the spirit of teamwork, the Advisory Council meets with staff for three hours once a month. Council members work with doctors, nurses, and other health care staff to ensure the highest level of care and services is provided throughout our health care system. Members give feedback and suggestions to staff on a variety of issues, including patient education materials, signage, patient safety efforts, cleanliness, and more.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Veteran and Family Advisory Council is to partner with health care staff to:

- strengthen communication among Veterans, families & staff
- assist in identifying ways for improving safety, satisfaction, and quality of care
- allow staff to listen to and honor Veteran and family preferences

Suggested Resource

“Be Involved in Your Health Care” brochure developed by the Veteran and Family Advisory Council.

For more information, go to: <http://www.paloalto.va.gov/vfcc.asp>

Veterans Service Officers

Call for hours of service and/or an appointment

Palo Alto

AMVETS (650) 493-5000 ext. 65392

American Legion (650) 493-5000 ext. 65388

Disabled American Veterans (650) 493-5000 ext. 63644

VA Benefits Counselor (650) 493-5000 ext. 65539

Livermore

AMVETS (925) 373-4700 ext. 35673

Regional Office

1-800-827-1000

Vet Center Services

Am I eligible for Vet Center readjustment counseling?

If you, or a family member, served in any combat zone and received a military campaign ribbon (Vietnam, Southwest Asia, OEF, OIF, etc.) then your family is eligible for Vet Center services. Any Veteran who experienced sexual assault or sexual harassment while serving in the military, (referred to as Military Sexual Trauma – MST) is eligible for Vet Center counseling services.

What is readjustment counseling?

Readjustment counseling is a wide range of services offered to eligible Veterans and their families in the effort to make a successful transition from military to civilian life. They include:

- Individual and group counseling for Veterans and their families
- Family counseling for military related issues
- Bereavement counseling for families who experience an active duty death
- Military sexual trauma counseling and referral
- Outreach and education and community events
- Substance abuse assessment and referral
- Employment assessment and referral
- Benefits explanation and referral
- Screening & referral for medical issues including Traumatic Brain Injury and depression

Does VA have readjustment counseling for family members?

Family members of combat veterans have been eligible for Vet Center readjustment counseling services for military related issues since 1979.

Where is counseling offered?

VA's readjustment counseling is provided at community-based Vet Centers located near veterans and their families. All Vet Center services are prepaid through military service. Contact your nearest Vet Center toll-free during normal business hours at 1-800-905-4675 (Eastern) and 1-866-496-8838 (Pacific).

Patient Advocates

VAPAHCS and each employee want to provide you the best care possible. It is our mission to put Veterans first and provide exceptional care that improves your health and well-being. Our highest priority is to meet and exceed your needs and expectations. Therefore, if you have a suggestion, concern or compliment regarding your care please contact your treatment team.

If you feel your concerns are not being addressed, you may contact a Service-level Patient Advocate; this is a staff member on your unit. Each service has selected a designee as their Service-level Patient Advocate (SPA). A Service-level Patient Advocate is an employee who assists front-line staff in resolving issues if attempts at resolution with your treatment team have not been successful. A Service-level Patient Advocate resolves patient issues and works in collaboration with Patient Advocate Program Director to identify opportunities for improvement.

The Patient Advocacy program was established to ensure that all Veterans and their families who are served in VHA facilities have their complaints addressed in a convenient and timely manner. We want to use your feedback to make systems improvements. If a Veteran's complaint cannot be resolved at the point of service, you may contact the Patient Advocate Program Director. The Patient Advocate Program Director works directly with Service Chiefs and Service Management to facilitate resolution to problems beyond the scope of front-line staff, and participate in resolutions. If you wish to talk to the Patient Advocate Program Director during normal business hours, call (650) 493-5000 ext. 65544. The Patient Advocate office is located at Palo Alto in Building 101, third floor, room B3116.

Patient Advocate for Palo Alto, Menlo Park, Fremont
(650) 493-5000 ext. 65544

Patient Advocate for Monterey
(831) 883-3800 ext. 43852

Patient Advocate for Capitola
(831) 464-5519

Patient Advocate for San Jose
(408) 363-3000 ext. 75449 or ext. 74269

Patient Advocate for Livermore, Modesto, Stockton, Sonoma
(925) 373-4700 ext. 35622 or ext. 35106

Patient Advocates are available between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday. After 4:30 p.m. on weekends and on holidays call the Administrative Officer of the Day at 650-493-5000 ext. 65866.

VA Palo Alto Health Care System is accredited by The Joint Commission (TJC).

You may contact TJC with quality of care concerns at:

The Joint Commission Office of Quality Monitoring

1 Renaissance Blvd

Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181

1-800-994-6610

www.jointcommission.org/report_a_complaint.aspx

It is TJC policy to treat your name as confidential information. No retaliatory actions will be taken against employees for reporting quality of care concerns.

Rights and Responsibilities of VA Patients and Residents of Community Living Centers (CLC)

The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) is pleased you have selected us to provide your health care. We will provide you with personalized, patient-driven, compassionate, state-of-the-art care. Our goal is to make your experience as positive and pleasant as we can. As part of our service to you, to other Veterans and to the Nation, we are committed to improving health care quality. We also train future health care professionals, conduct research, and support our country in times of national emergency. In all of these activities, our employees will respect and support your rights as a patient or resident of a community living center (CLC). Your basic rights and responsibilities are outlined in this document. You will receive this information in your preferred language. Please talk with the VA treatment team members who are providing your care or to a patient advocate if you have any questions or would like more information about your rights and responsibilities.

I. Nondiscrimination and Respect

- You will be treated with dignity, compassion, and respect as an individual. Consistent with Federal law, VA policy, and accreditation standards of The Joint Commission, you will not be subject to discrimination for any reason, including for reasons of age, race, ethnicity, religion, culture, language, physical or mental disability, socioeconomic status, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression.
- You will receive care in a safe environment free from excess noise, and with sufficient light to ensure comfort and safety.
- You have a right to have access to the outdoors.
- We will seek to honor your cultural and personal values, beliefs, and preferences. We ask that you identify any cultural, religious, or spiritual beliefs or practices that influence your care.
- You or someone you choose has the right to keep and spend your money. You have the right to receive an accounting of any funds that VA is holding for you.
- We will respect your personal freedoms in the care and treatment we provide you. This includes trying to accommodate your normal sleep and wake cycles, food likes and dislikes, and other personal preferences.
- In the Community Living Center, you have the right to be free from chemical and physical restraints. In the inpatient acute care setting, and only in rare cases, the use of chemical and physical restraints may be used if all other efforts to keep you or others free from harm have not worked.
- In the Community Living Center, you may keep personal items and are expected to wear your own clothes. As an inpatient, you may wear your own clothes depending on your medical condition.

- You have the right to keep and use personal items as long as they are safe and legal.
- You have the right to social interaction and regular exercise. You will have the opportunity for religious worship and spiritual support. You may decide whether to participate in these activities. You may decide whether or not to perform tasks in or for the Medical Center or in the Community Living Center.
- You have the right to communicate freely and privately. You will have access to public telephones and VA will assist you in sending and receiving mail. You may participate in civic rights, such as voting and free speech.
- When a loved one is involved in support and care of a VA patient or CLC resident, VA considers a patient or CLC resident's family to include anyone related to the patient or CLC resident in any way (for example, biologically or legally) and anyone whom the patient or CLC resident considers to be family. If you are an inpatient, any persons you choose can be with you to support you during your stay.

Medical staff may restrict visitors for inpatients if medical or safety concerns require it. You will be told promptly about any visitor restriction and the reason for it.

- In order to provide a safe treatment environment for all patients or CLC residents and staff, you and your visitors are expected to avoid unsafe acts that place others at risk for accidents or injuries. Please immediately report any condition you believe to be unsafe.

II. Participation in Treatment Decisions

- Your privacy will be protected.
- You will be given information about the health benefits you can receive. The information will be provided in a way you can understand.
- You will receive information about the costs of your care (for example, co-payments), if any, before you are treated. You are responsible for paying your portion of any costs associated with your care.
- Your health record will be kept confidential. Information about you will not be released without your authorization unless permitted by law (an example of this is State public health reporting). You have the right to have access to or request a copy of your own health records.
- Please respect the privacy of other patients and CLC residents and do not reveal their health information that you may overhear or otherwise become aware of.

III. Partnering in Care

- You have a right to express your preferences concerning future medical care in an advance directive, including designating a health care agent to make health care decisions on your behalf when you can no longer do so.
- You, and any person(s) you choose, will be involved in all decisions about your care. You will be given information you can understand about the benefits and risks of treatment in your preferred language. You will

be given other options. You can agree to or refuse any treatment. You will be told what is likely to happen to you if you refuse a treatment. Refusing a treatment will not affect your rights to future care but you take responsibility for the impact this decision may have on your health.

- Tell your provider about your current condition, medicines (including over-the-counter and herbals), and medical history. Also, share any other information that affects your health. You should ask questions when you do not understand something about your care. This will help us provide you the best care possible.
- You will be given, in writing, the name and title of the provider in charge of your care. You have the right to be involved in choosing your provider. You also have the right to know the names and titles of those who provide you care. This includes students and other trainees. Providers will properly introduce themselves when they take part in your care.
- You will be educated about your role and responsibilities as a patient or CLC resident. This includes your participation in decision making and care at the end of life.
- If you believe you cannot follow the treatment plan, you have a responsibility to tell your provider or treatment team.
- You will be informed of all outcomes of your care, including any possible injuries associated with your care. You will be informed about how to request compensation and other remedies for any serious injuries.
- You have the right to have your pain assessed and to receive treatment to manage your pain. You and your treatment team will develop a pain management plan together. You are expected to help the treatment team by telling them if you have pain and if the treatment is working.
- As an inpatient or CLC resident, you will be provided any transportation necessary for your treatment plan.
- You have the right to choose whether or not you will participate in any research project. Any research will be clearly identified. Potential risks of the research will be identified and there will be no pressure on you to participate.
- You will be included in resolving any ethical issues about your care. If you have ethical issues or concerns, you may speak with the Medical Center's Ethics Consultation Service for help.

IV. Concerns or Complaints

- You are encouraged and expected to seek help from your treatment team or a patient advocate if you have problems or complaints. Any privacy complaints will be addressed by the facility Privacy Officer. You will be given understandable information about the complaint process in your preferred language. You may complain verbally or in writing, without fear of retaliation.
- If you believe that you or your family member has been neglected, abused or exploited by VA staff, please report this promptly to the treatment team or patient advocate. You will receive help immediately.

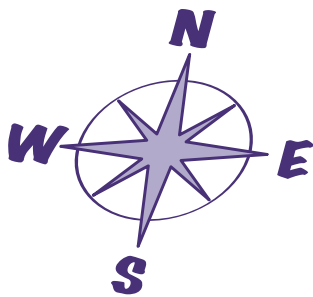
- If you believe the organization has failed to address or satisfy your concerns about health care quality and safety, you may contact the Joint Commission's Office of Quality Monitoring at 1-800-994-6610. If you believe that the organization has failed to address your concerns about suspected criminal activities, fraud, waste, abuse, or mismanagement, you may contact the VA Office of the Inspector General at 1-800-488-8244 or e-mail vaoighotline@VA.gov.

V. Additional Rights and Responsibilities of Community Living Center Residents

Because the CLC serves as your home for short or long-stay services, you have the following additional rights and responsibilities as a CLC resident:

- Staff will knock on your bedroom door prior to entry.
- You have the right to receive care from the same staff member everyday to the extent that consistent assignment is possible.
- You may have visitors at any time of the day or night provided visitors are respectful of you, your need for privacy and the privacy of others. You may refuse visitors at any time.
- You have a right to conjugal visits and you have a right to privacy during those visits.
- Your care will be delivered in a setting that resembles home. Therefore, you will be invited to have your meals in a designated dining area and you will have access to those activities that contribute to meaningful use of time.
- In preparation for being discharged to your own home, you and or your care giver may be invited to participate in activities that prepare you to go home such as self administration of medications and treatments.
- You and your care givers have a right to attend treatment planning meetings and participate in household or resident council.

This document was signed and issued by the VA Under Secretary for Health on January 15, 2013. IB 10-88, P91985



Chapter 6

My HealtheVet www.myhealth.va.gov

My HealtheVet is a national VA Internet-based program that helps veterans be more active partners in their health care.

I want to make my own health record

My HealtheVet allows you to create your own electronic Personal Health Record. Use My HealtheVet to renew prescriptions, view wellness reminders, and record your contact information, military health history, medications, tests or allergies.

Can I record my home health measures?

You can use My HealtheVet to record your home health measures: blood pressure, blood sugar, heart rate, weight, temperature or pain levels. My HealtheVet will also give you access to health libraries so you can learn about medical conditions, medications, health news and preventive health.

I want to be able to e-mail my health care team

An upgraded, Premium, My HealtheVet account will allow you to communicate electronically with your health care team through **Secure Messaging**. You will also be able to view and refill your VA prescriptions, view your wellness reminders, VA appointments, VA chemistry and hematology lab results and other portions of your VA electronic health information through the **Blue Button** download.

How do I register for My HealtheVet?

To use My HealtheVet you must register online. To register, log on from home or your local library to establish an Advanced account. For an upgraded, Premium account, complete the **In-Person Authentication** process. Go to the Release of Information or the Business Office at a VA site near you. You will need to bring a government picture ID with you and sign a release form.

Please ask a clinic staff member for assistance if needed.

Contact the VAPAHCS My HealtheVet Coordinator: (650) 849-0393 or the National MHV Help Desk toll-free at 1-877-327-0022

Facebook and Twitter

Get up-to-date information about your VA health care and community events on Facebook at facebook.com/VAPAHCS and on Twitter at twitter.com/VAPaloAlto!

Veterans Health Library

The new Veterans Health Library (VHL) provides you and your family and caregivers with 24/7 access to comprehensive, Veteran-focused health information. The Library is a one-stop source for health information to help Veterans stay well and well-informed. All health information has been approved by VA experts, and includes topics specific to Veterans, for example, posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), combat-related Traumatic Brain Injury, Agent Orange, and Cold Injury. The VHL offers thousands of resources including:

- Information sheets and electronic booklets
- Videos
- Workbooks to help you manage specific diseases
- Information on medications and tests
- Caregiver information

And much more

You can access the Veterans Health Library by going to **www.veteranshealthlibrary.org** or on My HealtheVet at **<https://www.myhealth.va.gov>** and clicking: Enter Here -> Research Health -> Medical Library -> Veterans Health Library.

Parking in Palo Alto

Due to the nature of our community, parking can often be limited at our Palo Alto campus, so patients are encouraged to take public transportation whenever available. Please ensure you lock your vehicle and take any valuables with you, as we are not responsible for theft or damage to vehicles parked on the grounds.

Visitors and outpatients may park in any legal areas not specifically designated for others. Some of the most convenient places to park on the Palo Alto campus are in Lots 100N and 100S. These parking lots are located directly in front of Building 100 as you enter the campus from Miranda Avenue.

Upon entering these lots, you may be greeted and directed to open parking. Please be careful to park in appropriate spaces, as our VA Police may issue a ticket on cars parked illegally. For your convenience, valet parking is available at the Palo Alto campus from 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Free VA Shuttle Service

The VA Palo Alto Health Care System has a shuttle bus that provides complimentary service between its facilities (Capitola, Fremont, Livermore, Menlo Park, Modesto, Monterey, Palo Alto, San Jose, Santa Cruz, Sonoma, and Stockton). It also provides service to San Benito County. For the complete shuttle schedule, please see **<http://www.paloalto.va.gov/docs/commute/VAShuttleSchedule.pdf>**

Development, Expansion and Construction

The VA Palo Alto Health Care System is undergoing a record amount of construction and expansion to improve health care for Veterans throughout our health care system. Each project is an opportunity to advance the delivery of services to you. We sincerely appreciate your patience and cooperation as we work towards transforming our facilities. Please visit our construction website for the latest information on construction and development throughout our health care system.

<http://www.paloalto.va.gov/construction.asp>.

Smoking

The VA Palo Alto Health Care System is committed to providing a safe environment for patients, visitors and staff, and providing an environment that models health promotion and disease prevention. This includes promoting a smoke free environment. To achieve this goal, smoking is limited to certain designated areas throughout the health care system.

Smoking is NOT permitted:

- Inside any buildings
- On walkways

Smoking is allowed at the following places at each division

(You may request a map of designated smoking areas):

Palo Alto:

- Smoking shelter between Buildings 5 and 6
- Designated parking lots, at least 35 feet from the walkways (there is no smoking allowed in the Emergency Department parking lot behind Building 100)
- Building 7, backside of the central courtyard

Menlo Park:

- Designated parking lots (please request a map)
- Circular meeting areas in front of Buildings 349, 350, 351, and 352
- Smoking shelter on the west side of Building 334
- Building 331, inner patio area located from the electronic doors on B wing to the electronic doors on the A hall, and outside the C wing electronic door by room C 120
- Building 347, four concrete tables outside and an area demarcated by a low concrete wall
- Building 221, near the personal property shop

Livermore:

- Designated parking lots (please request a map)
- Smoking shelter outside the entrance of the corridor between Buildings 62 and 64
- Building 90, patio outside resident dining room on first floor under the gazebo

San Jose, Monterey, Capitola, Stockton, Modesto, Sonora and Fremont:

- At least 35 feet (where applicable) from any entrance
- If you are a smoker, quitting smoking is likely the single most significant thing you can do to improve your health. VA Palo Alto Health Care System encourages you not to smoke.

Stop Smoking Clinics

Help is available if you would like to quit smoking. Patients may contact TeleQuit, our phone-based program (800-455-0057 ext. 60557), or call for an appointment in one of the Smoking Cessation Clinics:

Palo Alto Division (650) 493-5000 ext. 67004

San Jose Division (408) 363-3037

Stockton Division (209) 946-3400 ext. 43407

Contraband

It is against the law to bring any of the following items onto VA grounds or into any VA building:

- Guns or any type of firearm • Explosives of any type
- Knives with blades over 3 inches • Alcohol, illegal drugs, drug paraphernalia
- Mace, Tazers, martial arts equipment

If you have any questions please ask VA staff. Additional items may be unsafe in certain clinical areas.

Voluntary Service

The Voluntary Service is affiliated with over 50 different community groups and service organizations and provides volunteers to assist the health care system with daily activities. The staff at the VA Palo Alto Health Care System is reinforced by approximately 2,800 community volunteers who contribute over 315,000 hours of service per year to our patient care activities.

Barber Shop

The Menlo Park Division offers a barber shop. The barber works part-time in the shop and part-time on the wards. To obtain the barber's schedule call (650) 493-5000 ext. 52-27381 or 63965.

Canteen

There are canteen services at Palo Alto and Menlo Park. There is a coffee shop at Livermore.

Some other sites have vending machines. The canteen consists of a retail store and vending services. The cafeteria has a variety of items including Smart Choice food choices, and our Simply To Go Program. Many items are available in the store, including snacks, personal hygiene items, men's and women's clothing, and electronics. The cafeteria is closed on weekends and holidays.

Palo Alto

The cafeteria and retail store are located on the first floor of Building 101. Cafeteria hours are 7:00 am-3:00 pm, and the retail store is open from 7:00 am - 4:00 pm Monday through Friday, Saturday 8:00 am - 3:00 pm and Sunday 8:00 am - 1:00 pm.

Menlo Park

The cafeteria and retail store are located on the first floor of Building 334. Cafeteria hours are 7:30 am - 2:30 pm, and the retail store is open Monday through Friday from 7:30 am - 3:30 pm.

ATM

There is an Automated Teller Machine (ATM) located on the Palo Alto campus, on the 1st floor of Building 101. The ATM machine belongs to the Meriwest Credit Union. ATM fees may apply.

Information Desk

There is an information desk in the main lobby of Building 100 at Palo Alto, staffed with volunteers to assist you. The desk is open from Monday through Friday 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM (650-493-5000 ext: 60026). The volunteer desk at Livermore campus is in the main lobby of Building 62 and open from 8:00 am until 1:00 pm and may be reached at (925) 373-4700 ext: 35331.

Lost and Found

Attempts are made to locate owners whenever possible, but after 90 days all unclaimed items are disposed of in accordance with VA regulations. Found items should be turned in to the Voluntary Service Office at each of the inpatient divisions. Questions about lost items can be directed to Voluntary Service at Palo Alto at (650) 493-5000 ext. 65800, Menlo Park at (650) 493-5000 ext. 22263 and Livermore at (925) 373-4700 ext. 35360. At other clinics, please see clinic clerks regarding lost and found items.

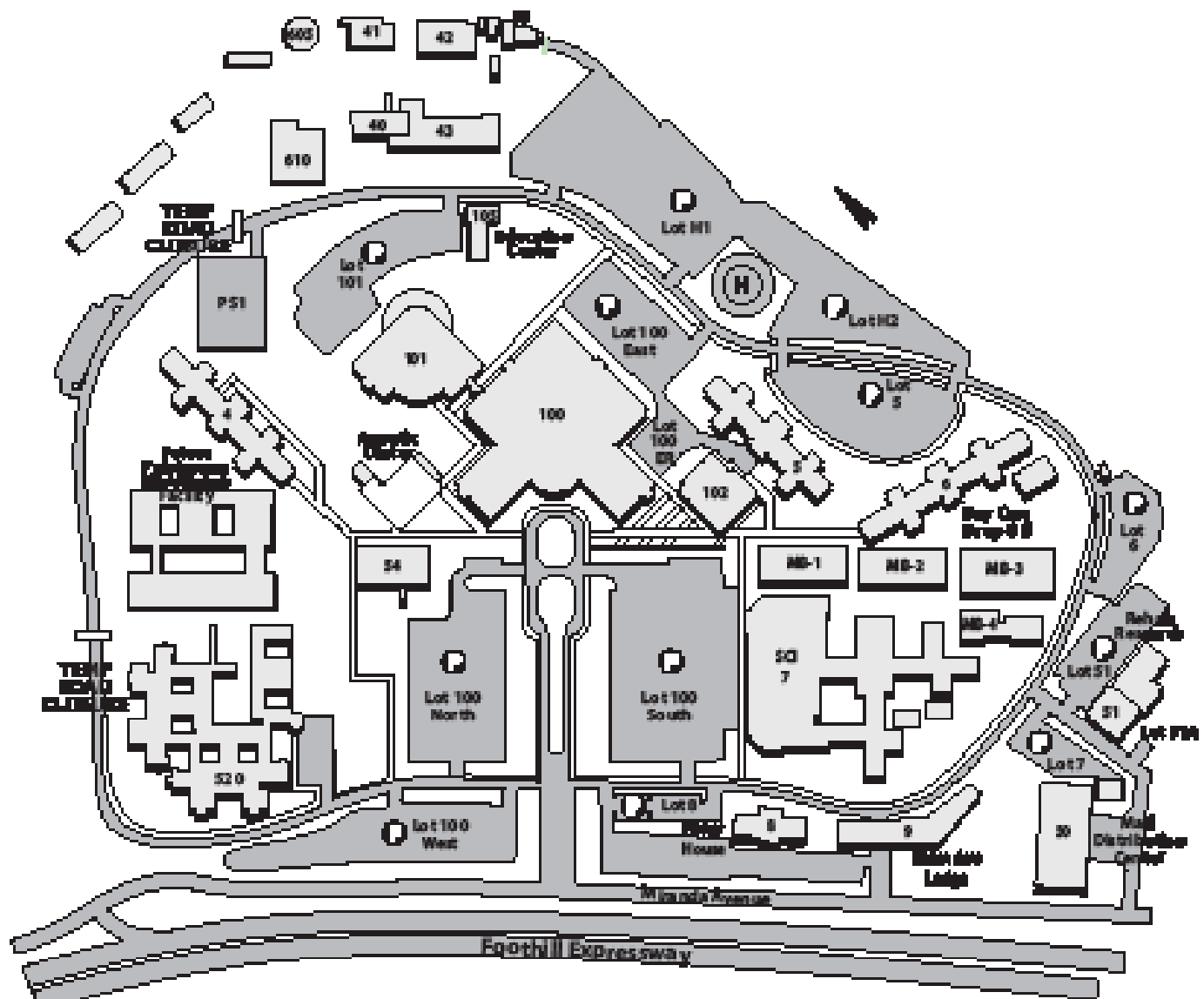
Facility Maps

VA PALO ALTO DIVISION

3801 Miranda Avenue

Palo Alto, CA 94304

(650) 493-5000

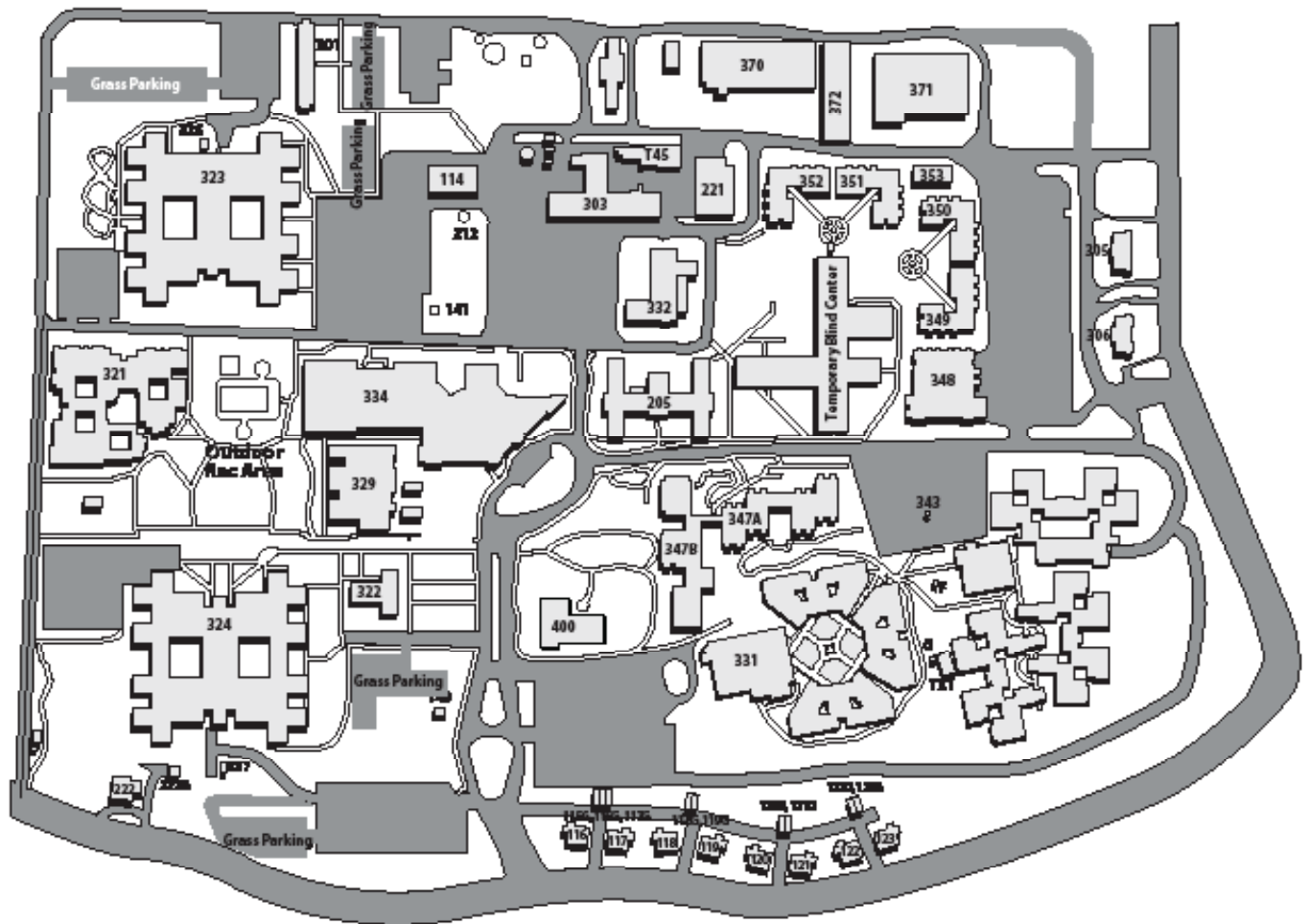


VA MENLO PARK DIVISION

795 Willow Road

Menlo Park, CA 94025

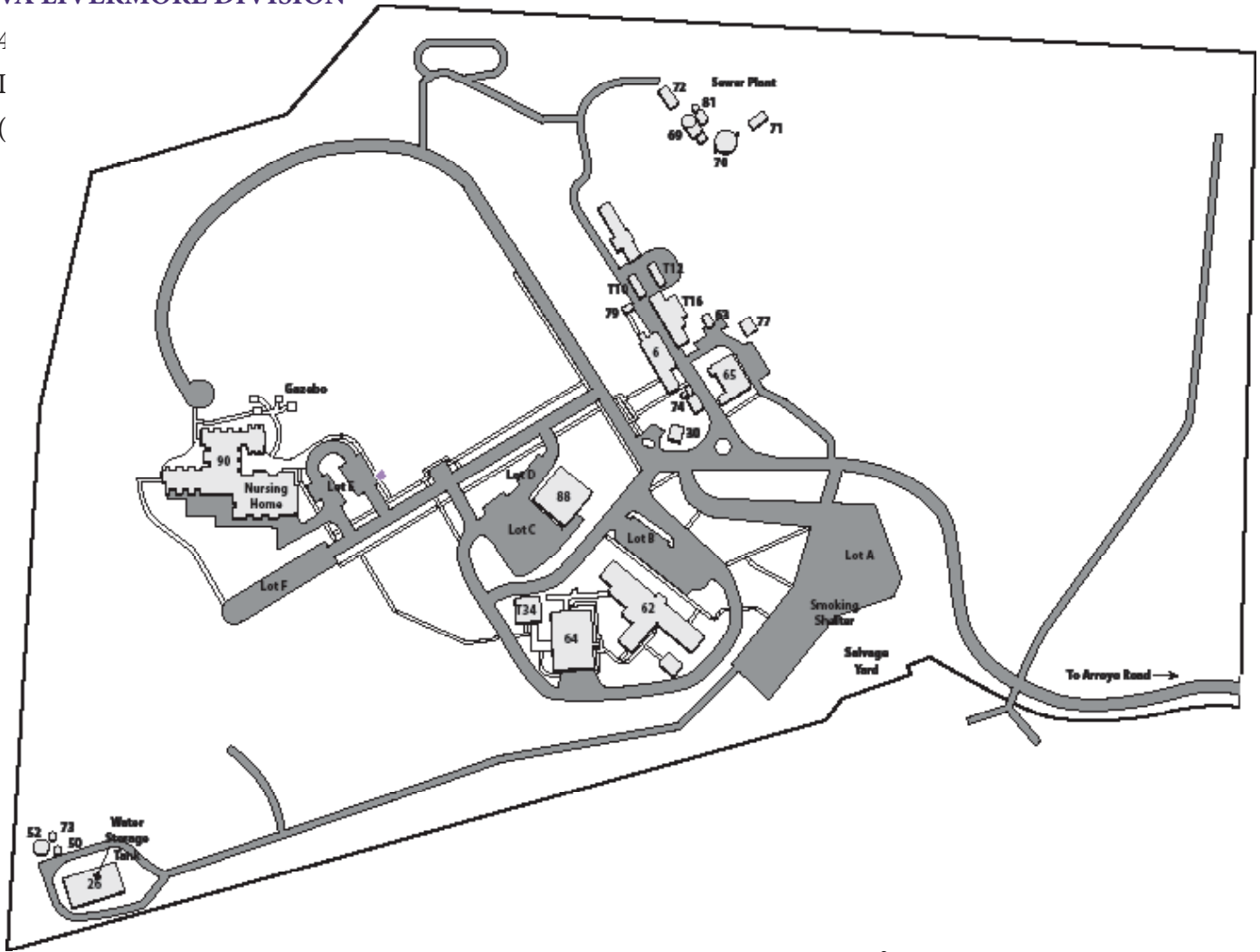
(650) 493-5000



VA LIVERMORE DIVISION

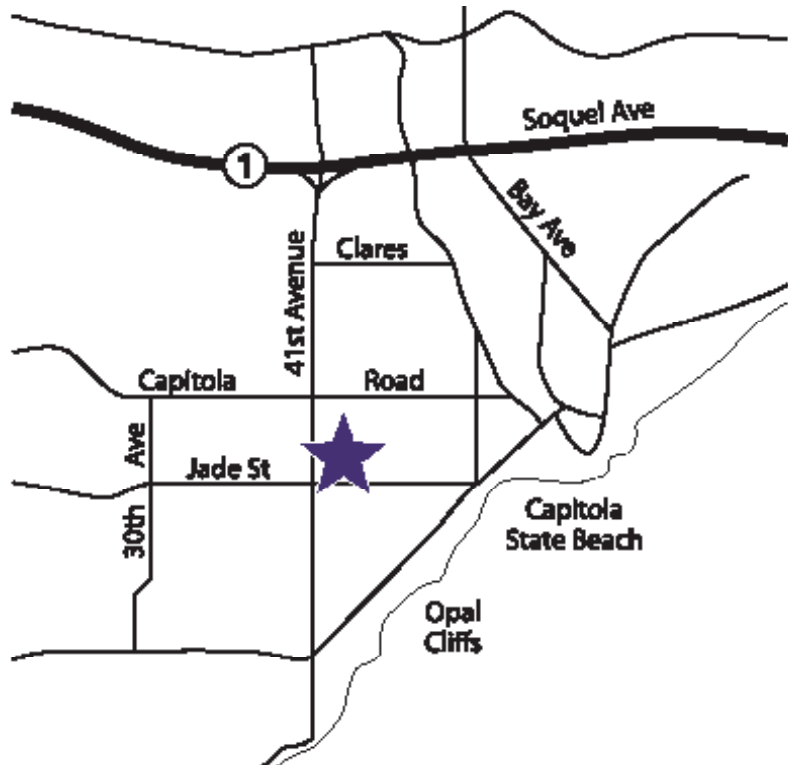
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VA CAPITOLA CLINIC

1350 N. 41st Avenue, Suite 102
Capitola, CA 95010
(831) 464-5519



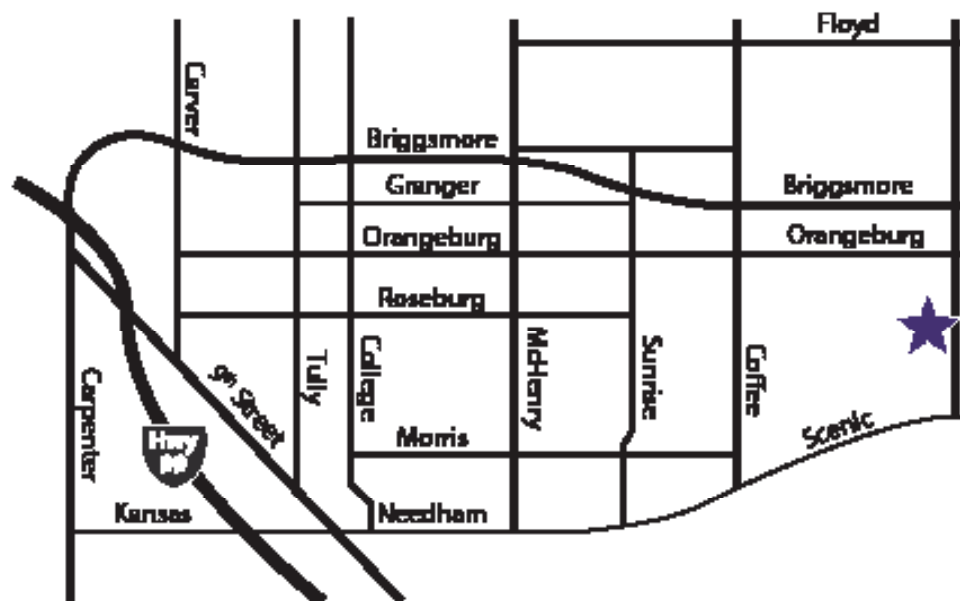
VA FREMONT CLINIC

39199 Liberty Street
Fremont, CA 94538
(510) 791-4000



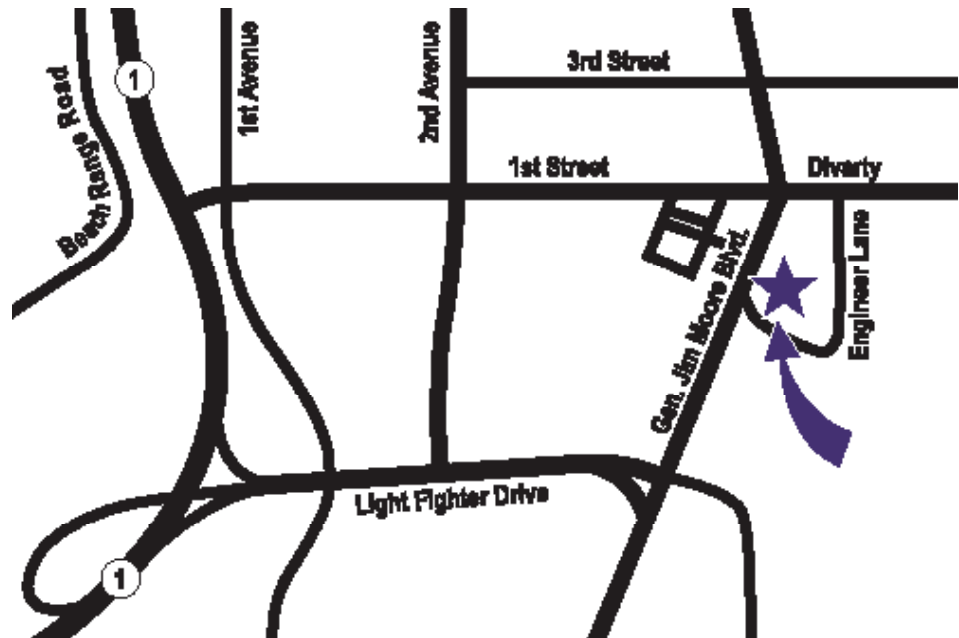
VA MODESTO CLINIC

1225 Oakdale Road
Modesto, CA 95355
(209) 557-6200



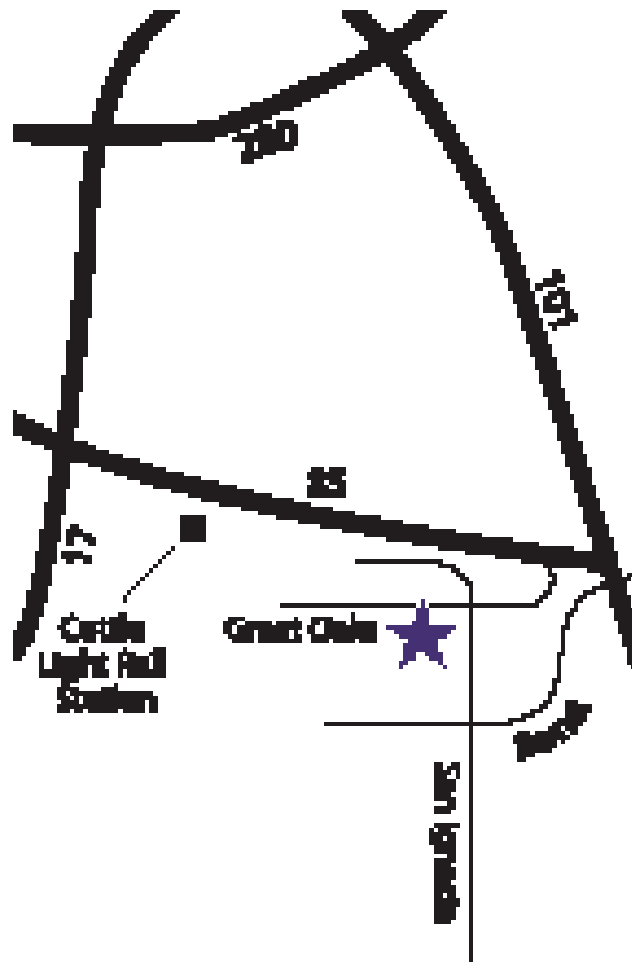
VA MONTEREY CLINIC

3401 Engineer Lane
Seaside, CA 93955
(831) 883-3800



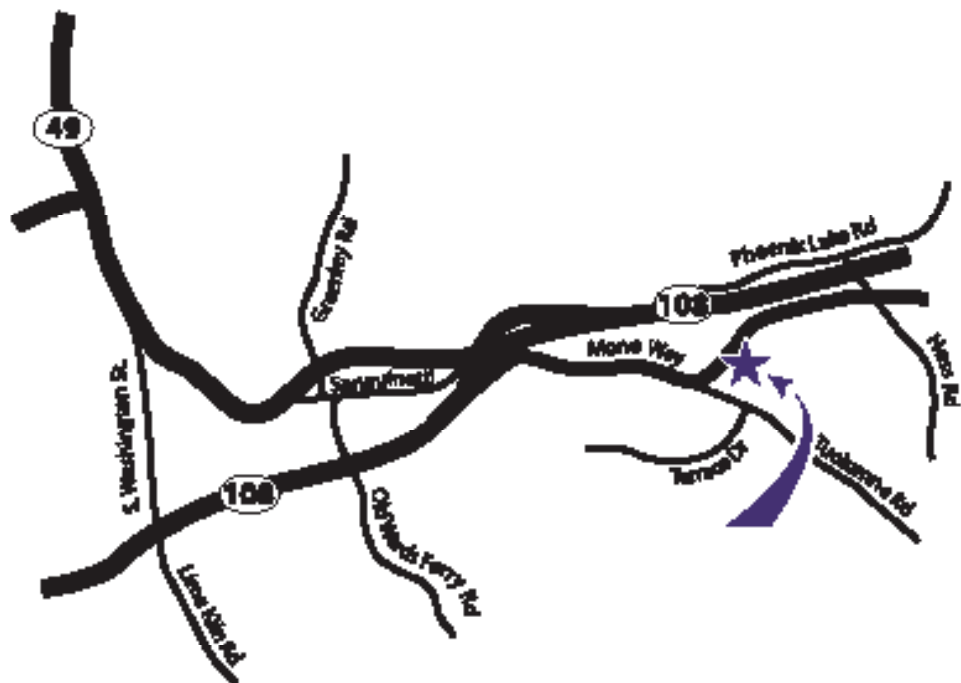
VA SAN JOSE CLINIC

80 Great Oaks Boulevard
San Jose, CA 95119
(408) 363-3000

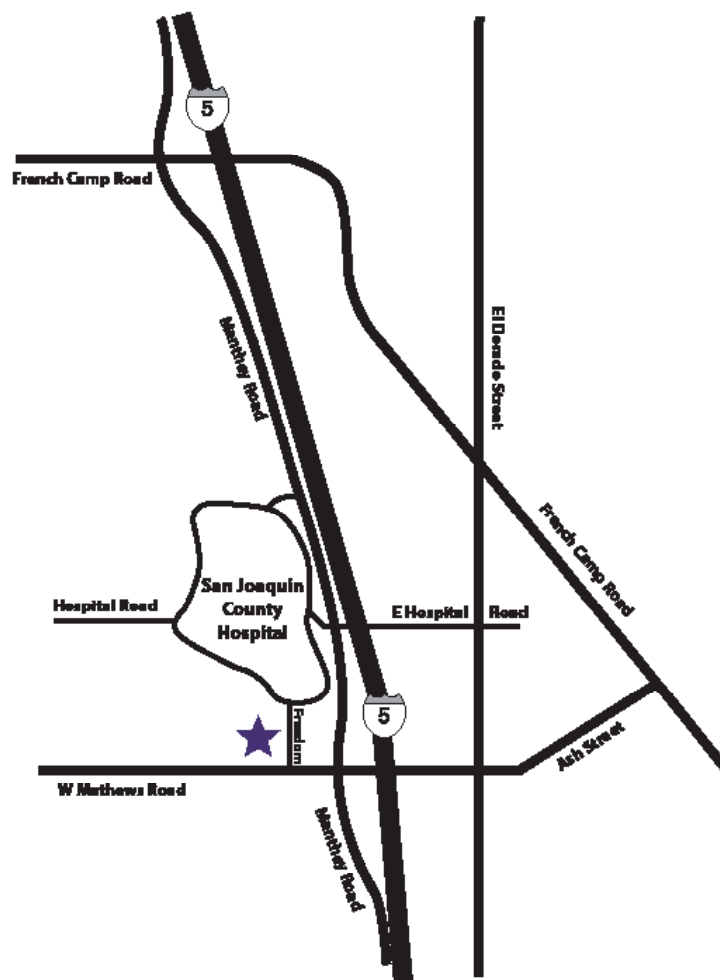


VA SONORA CLINIC

13663 Mono Way
Sonora, CA 95370
(209) 588-2600

**VA STOCKTON CLINIC**

7777 Freedom Drive
French Camp, CA 95231
(209) 946-3400



Important VA Phone Numbers & Contact Information

Hospital Operator

650-493-5000 (follow automated prompts)

Telephone Care Program (Advice Nurse)

1-800-455-0057

Pharmacy

1-800-311-2511

Ambulatory Care Clinics

1-800-455-0057

Veterans Crisis Line

1-800-273-TALK (8255)

VeteransCrisisLine.net

Admissions & Benefits Services Customer Service Line: (650) 493-5000, ext. 66266

American Legion (650) 493-5000 ext. 65388

AMVETS (650) 493-5000 ext. 65392 Palo Alto

AMVETS (925) 373-4700 ext. 35673 Livermore

Barbershop (Menlo Park) (650) 493-5000 ext. 27381 or 63965

Caregiver Support 1-855-260-3274 or

http://www.paloalto.va.gov/caregiver.asp

Chaplain Service (650) 493-5000 ext. 65532

Disabled American Veterans (650) 493-5000 ext. 63644

Facebook *www.facebook.com/vapahcs*

Home Based Primary Care 650-493-5000 ext. 62140

Information Desk Palo Alto 650-493-5000 ext: 60026
Livermore 925-373-4700 ext: 35331

Medical Care Cost Recovery Customer Service Line: 1-866-347-2353

My HealtheVet *www.myhealth.va.gov*

Patient Advocate:

Palo Alto, Menlo Park, Fremont

(650) 493-5000, x65544

San Jose (408) 363-3000, x75449 or x74269

Monterey (831) 883-3800 x43852

Capitola (831) 464-5519

Livermore, Modesto, Stockton, Sonora

(925) 373-4700, ext. 35622 or ext. 35106

Purchased Care (Fee Basis) Services Customer Service Line: (650) 617-2788

Release of Information (650) 493-5000 ext. 66406 or ext. 67298

http://www.paloalto.va.gov/release_of_information.asp

Social Work Service (650) 493-5000 ext. 65455

Twitter *www.twitter.com/vapaloalto*

VA Benefits Counselor (650) 493-5000 ext. 65539

VA Regional Office in Oakland 800-827-1000

http://vabenefits.vba.va.gov/vonapp

Vet Center Services 1-866-496-8838

Voluntary Service Palo Alto 650-493-5000 ext. 65800

Menlo Park 650-493-5000 ext. 22263

Livermore at 925-373-4700 ext. 35360

Women's Health Program (650) 852-3229

Addresses and Phone Numbers

Palo Alto

3801 Miranda Avenue
Palo Alto, CA 94304
(650) 493-5000

Livermore

4951 Arroyo Road
Livermore, CA 94550
(925) 373-4700 or 925-373-4700

Stockton

7777 South Freedom Rd
French Camp, CA 95231
(209) 946-3400

Modesto

1225 Oakdale Road
Modesto, CA 95355
(209) 557-6200

Sonora

13663 Mono Way
Sonora, CA 95370
(209) 588-2600

Capitola

1350 41st Avenue, Suite 102
Capitola, CA 95010-3906

(831) 464-5519

Menlo Park

795 Willow Road
Menlo Park, CA 94025
(650) 614-9997

San Jose

80 Great Oaks Boulevard
San Jose, CA 95119
(408) 363-3000

Monterey

3401 Engineer Lane
Seaside, CA 93955
(831) 883-3800

Fremont

39199 Liberty Street
Fremont, CA 94538
(510) 791-4000



Defining
EXCELLENCE
in the 21st Century

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(650) 493-5000 • www.paloalto.va.gov

January 2014